

VZCZCXRO7408
RR RUEHDE RUEHDIR RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHBC #0103/01 3081649
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 041649Z NOV 07
FM REO BASRAH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0631
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0214
INFO RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEPGAB/MNF-I C2X BAGHDAD IZ
RHEFDHP/DIA DHP-1 WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE
RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA 0001
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 0002
RUEHMK/AMEMBASSY MANAMA 0001
RUEHBC/REO BASRAH 0665

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BASRAH 000103

SIPDIS

NOFORN
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/4/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [PINS](#) [PHUM](#) [IR](#) [KU](#) [SA](#) [TC](#) [BA](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: PROMINENT SUNNI DEVELOPS NEW BLOC, WARNS OF VIOLENCE

REF: A. BASRAH 102 B. BASRAH 100

BASRAH 00000103 001.2 OF 002

CLASSIFIED BY: Louis L. Bono, Director, Regional Embassy Office
- Basrah, Department of State.
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

11. (C) Summary: Sheikh Abdul Karim al-Dosari, a leading member of the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP), told Regional Embassy Officers on October 31 that tribal sheikhs and nationalists were forming a new political bloc to be called the National Tribal Confederation. The Confederation seeks to unite nationalists regardless of ethnicity or religion and replicate the success of Anbar's tribal engagement. The Confederation has established an office in Basrah and plans to open other offices in the region; it is receiving some moral and financial support from Iraqi Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi. Dosari also described Basrah's security environment as the "calm before the storm." He said the Sunni community was daily targeted by Shia militias and noted the Gulf States, fearful that Basrah's problems would spill over, are seeking to increase their influence. He also suggested a plan for improved security that nearly mirrors that of Basrah's Security Chief. End Summary.

National Tribal Confederation -----

12. (C) Dosari told us that he was helping to organize a new political bloc called the Nationalist Tribal Confederation. Organizers, however, were waiting to make a formal announcement because the bloc's name, with its tribal connotation, might cause the political parties to view it as a threat, especially after the "Anbar Salvation's" political ascendancy in that province. Dosari said that Basrawis are disappointed with the sectarian parties, are looking for alternatives, and that nationalism is on the rise. He admitted that the Confederation hopes to provide that alternative by emulating the success of the Anbar model. In fact, the bloc was already coordinating with Anbar's tribal sheikhs to "learn from their experience." He described the Confederation as non-sectarian Sunni and Shia nationalists, as well as some Christians (Saabians and Assyrians).

13. (C) He indicated the Confederation is developing in southern Iraq, but has national aspirations. A headquarters office was established in Basrah and they intend to open offices soon in Amara and Nasiriyah. Dosari said that political, social, human rights, services, and agricultural committees have already been formed. On the national-level, the Confederation is getting support and funding from Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi's IIP. Dosari explained that the Confederation shared many of the same goals and ideas as the Sunni nationalist parties and he envisioned a possible future merger with the IIP, Iraqiyya, and Hiwar. He stressed, however, that the Confederation is not sectarian, but seeks to include as many nationalists as possible. He stressed that the Gulf States were not funding them, but did provide some monies to local Sunni charities.

Basrah's Sunni Population

14. (C) According to Dosari, there are approximately 150,000 Sunnis in Basrah province. Sunnis used to live in the Khamsame, al-Qibla, and al-Hiyaniah neighborhoods of Basrah city, but 95 percent of them have been expelled by Shia militias. He estimated that one to two Sunnis are killed by Shia militias each day. The Sunni community lives in fear, and they now have to travel in groups for security. He noted that educated Sunnis, Sunni religious leaders, and former Sunni Army officers are particularly targeted. Sunnis are mostly concentrated now in al-Faw, al-Zubayr, and Abu Khasib. The strongest Sunni tribes are the al-Saddun, al-Ghanam, al-Duwasir, al-Rashid, al-Howajir, and the Beni Khalid.

Sunni Perspective of Security in Basrah

15. (C) Dosari said Basrah was in the "calm before the storm" and urged us not to be fooled by the decreased attacks on the Coalition following the British accommodation with the Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM). The security gap, created by the British

BASRAH 00000103 002.2 OF 002

departure from Basrah Palace and a weak ISF, is being filled by the militias on Basrah's streets. Militias continue to stockpile weapons, and as the events of October 23 demonstrated, one JAM cell could throw the city into chaos within half an hour (ref A). The ISF, he opined, are unwilling and incapable of confronting the militias. Iran exacerbates the problem by supporting any militia willing to accept its lethal aid. One ISF source told Dosari that Iran has given externally supported JAM leaders 1 million Iraqi dinar (\$67,000) and 250 vehicles to ignore Muqtada al-Sadr's cease-fire. The Gulf States, he said, previously had little interest in Iraq, but Iran's influence and fears of a potential conflict spilling over are prompting them to get involved.

16. (C/NF) Dosari's recommendations to improve Basrah's security nearly mirror the plan of Basrah Security Chief, General Mohan Hafith Fahad (ref B): use the Iraqi Army to secure the Iranian border; disarm the militias with an amnesty or weapons buy-back program; cordon and search neighborhoods for illegal arms; switch local ISF units with others outside Basrah; and bring in more capable ISF units. He also suggested that Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki should officially disband all militias and in parallel provide militiamen some employment. The British, he said, were only concerned for their own safety and he pleaded for U.S. troops to deploy to the region. He also believes that early elections would help to redress the political imbalance at the national and provincial levels.

Biographic Information

17. (C) Al-Dosari was born, raised, and obtained a college education in Basrah. He was an Iraqi Army conscript for four years and afterwards began to work for the Ministry of Religious Affairs. He is a part-time Sunni cleric and religious instructor. In 1996 he joined and secretly worked for the

Islamic Party, which he says was a secular organization back then.
BONO